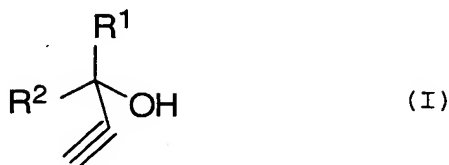


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We claim:

1. A process for preparing acetylene alcohols of the general  
5 formula I



where

- 15 R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> may be the same or different and are each independently hydrogen, a saturated or a mono- or polyunsaturated C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>30</sub>-alkyl, aryl, cycloalkylalkyl or cycloalkyl radical, each of which may optionally be  
20 substituted, or a group of the general formula (II)



where

- 30 R<sup>3</sup> and R<sup>4</sup> may be the same or different and are each independently hydrogen or a saturated or a mono- or polyunsaturated C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>30</sub>-alkyl, aryl, cycloalkylalkyl or cycloalkyl radical, each of which may optionally be substituted, and the dashed line may represent an additional double bond,

- 35 by monoethynylating a ketone of the general formula R<sup>1</sup>-CO-R<sup>2</sup> by

- (a) reacting lithium with a C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl halide  
 (b) feeding in acetylene gas  
 40 (c) adding the ketone.

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2. A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction of lithium with the C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-alkyl halide is carried out in the presence of catalytic amounts of naphthalene or 4,4'-di-tert-butylbiphenyl.

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3. A process as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the ketone used is selected from the group of acetone, methyl vinyl ketone,  $\beta$ -ionone, tetrahydrogeranylacetone, 6-methylheptanone, hexahydrofarnesylacetone, diethyl ketone, methyl ethyl ketone, cyclohexanone, methyl t-butyl ketone, pseudoionone, methylhexenone and H-geranylacetone.

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